

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 083686

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, UN, SF, WA

SUBJECT: VENUE FOR NAMIBIA TALKS

REF: USUN 1094

1. WE ARE NOT PERSUADED BY THE CASE
PRESENTED BY UK, FRANCE, FRG AND CANADA
FOR HOLDING THE NAMIBIAN TALKS IN CAPE
TOWN (PARA 3 REFTEL). ON THE CONTRARY, WE
BELIEVE THERE ARE SOUND REASONS FOR PROPOSING
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TALKS IN NEW YORK.

2. WE ARE STRUCK BY THE FACT THAT VORSTER
LEFT IT TO THE FIVE GOVERNMENTS TO PROPOSE
THE TIME AND SITE OF THE TALKS AND DID NOT
MENTION CAPE TOWN. THIS SUGGESTS TO US
THAT SOUTH AFRICA IS PREPARED TO GO ELSEWHERE

AND TO SEND A RESPONSIBLE SENIOR OFFICIAL
TO PARTICIPATE IN TALKS. WHILE IT IS TRUE
THAT A SAG OFFICIAL, REGARDLESS OF RANK,
WOULD NEED TO COMMUNICATE WITH CAPE TOWN

DURING TALKS, BY SAME TOKEN, WESTERN REPRESENTATIVES
MIGHT, IF MEETING WERE HELD IN CAPE TOWN,
HAVE NEED TO REFER TO THEIR CAPITALS FOR
GUIDANCE OR DECISIONS. THUS, WE DO NOT
BELIEVE IT WOULD BE EITHER MORE DIFFICULT OR
TIME-CONSUMING TO HOLD MEETINGS IN NEW YORK
THAN IT WOULD BE TO HAVE THEM IN CAPE TOWN.

3. NEW YORK OFFERS GREATER POSSIBLE FLEXIBILITY
IN TERMS OF PARTICIPANTS, DIRECT OR INDIRECT,
IN THE TALKS. ALTHOUGH, AS NOTED IN REFTEL,
SYG WALDHEIM MIGHT NOT WISH TO BE CONSULTED
FREELY FOR ADVICE AND WE MIGHT PREFER TO
DEFER UNTIL LATER DATE ANY LIAISON WITH
RESPONSIBLE SPOKESMEN FOR FRONT LINE STATES
OR NIGERIA, IT QUITE POSSIBLE THAT AT SOME
POINT DURING FIVE POWER DISCUSSIONS WITH
SOUTH AFRICA, IT WOULD BE ADVISABLE TO DRAW
THEM INTO ONE ASPECT OR ANOTHER OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.
THIS, OF COURSE, COULD BE DONE IN NEW YORK,
BUT NOT IN CAPE TOWN. MOREOVER, IF IT WERE
USEFUL AND ADVISABLE, DISCUSSANTS MIGHT WISH
TO MAKE SOME CONTACT WITH SWAPO REPRESENTATIVE
DURING TALKS.

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4. SYMBOLICALLY, CONDUCTING THE TALKS IN
CAPE TOWN COULD CONVEY WRONG IMPRESSION TO
AFRICANS. THE NAMIBIAN DISPUTE IS A UNITED
NATIONS MATTER AND THE CONTACT GROUP REPRESENTS
THE FIVE WESTERN MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY
COUNCIL. WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE MORE APPROPRIATE
TO INITIATE FIVE POWER TALKS WITH SOUTH
AFRICA IN NEW YORK RATHER THAN ON THE HOME
GROUND OF THE GOVERNMENT WHICH OVER THE YEARS
HAS OPPOSED UN EFFORTS TO END ITS CONTROL
OVER NAMIBIA.

5. IN SOUTH AFRICA, THERE WOULD BE AN ENORMOUS
AMOUNT OF PUBLICITY GIVEN TO THE MEETING,
POSSIBLY MAKING IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE SAG
TO MAKE THE KIND OF COMPROMISES IT MUST IF
THERE IS TO BE ANY PROGRESS TOWARD AN INTERNATIONALLY
ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION OF THE NAMIBIAN DISPUTE.

WE BELIEVE THAT MEETING IN NEW YORK, WHILE
SURE TO DRAW SOUTH AFRICAN MEDIA ATTENTION,

WOULD NOT GENERATE SAME DEGREE OF PUBLICITY
IF HELD IN CAPE TOWN.

6. FOR CAPE TOWN: WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR
ASSESSMENT OF THE RELATIVE MERITS OF CAPE
TOWN VERSUS NEW YORK. WE WOULD APPRECIATE
YOUR JUDGMENT AS TO WHETHER SAG WILL BE
PREPARED TO SEND A SENIOR OFFICIAL SUCH AS
BRAND FOURIE TO NEW YORK. WE HAVE NO OBJECTION
TO YOUR REVIEWING OUR CONCERNS IN PARA 1
THROUGH 5 WITH YOUR FOUR WESTERN COLLEAGUES,
SEEKING THEIR JUDGMENT.

7. FOR BONN, LONDON, OTTAWA, PARIS: YOU
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SHOULD REVIEW OUR THINKING IN PARA 1 THROUGH
5 WITH FOREIGN OFFICE AND URGE THAT THEY
CONSIDER THE MATTER FURTHER IN THAT LIGHT.
ALTHOUGH WE WOULD BE WILLING TO DISCUSS THE
MATTER WHEN EXPERTS MEET IN NEW YORK ON APRIL 18,
WE WOULD MUCH PREFER THE DECISION BE MADE
BEFORE THEN IN VIEW OF VORSTER'S EXPRESS
DESIRE TO PROCEED PROMPTLY.

8. FOR USUN: YOU MIGHT WISH TO REVIEW WITH
YOUR FOUR WESTERN COLLEAGUES OUR THINKING AND
ACTION WE ARE TAKING.

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